

**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting

**Date of meeting:** 5 February 2020

**Subject:** Volunteering in Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Report by:** Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Wards affected:** ALL

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To highlight the volunteering opportunities that Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services provide
- 1.2 To highlight the health and wellbeing benefits of volunteering and the contribution which volunteers make to the city

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the important contribution of volunteers to Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services is noted.**
- 2.2 That the significant health and wellbeing benefits of volunteering are noted.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 In 2019/20 across the Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services directorate volunteers contributed more than 42,000 hours of work. This is the equivalent of 5,680 days or 24 full time staff. A detailed breakdown can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.2 Cultural services offer a broad range of volunteer opportunities across our different services. There are many different options available depending on what people want to get out of volunteering and what they want to put in. There are opportunities around the city, indoors and outdoors. Our volunteer offer is also flexible. Many of our volunteers have been with us for years, while some volunteer during holidays from education or when they have time.

- 3.3 These figures are made up of many hundreds of individual volunteers. The community centres that we support, for example, have 88 trustees and 81 other volunteers. Libraries are supported by 218 volunteers, while 59 volunteers support work wildlife sites and open spaces. Volunteers also contributed more than 200 hours to supporting the D-Day 75 events.
- 3.4 Volunteering also reaches further than the sites and services that we directly manage. Trustees of our partner organisations and revenue clients are also volunteers who benefit the city.
- 3.5 Volunteers help us to represent the communities that we serve by giving them a role in how they are delivered. We include them in consultation and training, and they are an integral part of what we do. Funded projects that we manage are usually required to include a volunteer element.
- 3.6 Our services have developed expertise and good practice in supporting volunteers over many years, for example Museums and Visitor Services gaining Investors in Volunteers status. As part of this accreditation standard volunteers are issued with a handbook, and are given roles descriptions, an induction and supervision in a similar manner to staff. They are given training opportunities similar to staff.
- 3.7 Volunteers bring important value-added for our services. In many cases they help us to do things that we otherwise might not be able to do, such as object handling or delivering guided tours. They bring specialist skills, for example retired engineers who volunteer at Eastney Gas Engine House. For many years veterans volunteered at the D-Day Story talking to visitors about their experiences and many reviews of the museum cited this as the highlight of their visit.
- 3.8 Volunteers are local stakeholders and champions for our services. We include them in consultation and they help to connect us with the communities that we serve. Volunteers are about much more than free labour. Support and developing volunteers effectively and meaningfully requires staff support, and more volunteers means more support. It is important that volunteers are not taken for granted and that we support them fully.
- 3.9 2020 was a particular challenge for supporting volunteers. Many of our buildings have been closed for prolonged periods as per Government guidelines. Many of our volunteers are older and in vulnerable groups in terms of the Covid-safe guidance, so volunteer numbers are likely to be lower in 2020/21. This shows how much we miss them when they cannot come in and that we are giving opportunities to people at risk of social isolation.
- 3.10 Although our volunteering numbers are impressive there is a need and an opportunity to consider the value that those numbers represent. The National Lottery Heritage Fund have removed numbers from volunteering targets as part of new funding applications, and are now asking for qualitative stories that demonstrate impact. We know that some of our volunteers have benefited hugely from their experiences, whether through career development or improved wellbeing.

- 3.11 It is also important to note the contribution that The Hive makes to supporting volunteering in the city. During 2020 volunteers have given over 87,113 hours, equating to 45.2 full time equivalent staff. This contribution is worth £850,000, and represents a return on investment of 1500%.
- 3.12 The Hive currently offers 289 volunteering opportunities across 140 organisations, ranging from different types of befriending support to helping disadvantaged children with their literacy skills and one to one tutoring to help plug the gap created by schools closing.
- 3.13 During 2020 Hive volunteers were very much focused on the COVID response. Throughout the year the Hive managed over 4,000 volunteers. Over 90% of volunteers have been managed by our Volunteer Centre, a joint venture between PCC Cultural Services Team and The Hive. Without this collaboration, the Centre would cease to exist and we would not only lose the benefit of these volunteers and their work but these roles would then fall onto already overstretched services.
- 3.14 The Hive's COVID Volunteers have offered practical help including but not exclusively locality leads (42) to coordinate on the ground help by an army of volunteers (1000+), collation and delivery of food parcels (185), taking elderly and vulnerable people for the vaccines (137). Many 'one off' COVID volunteers have gone on to volunteer for other longer term roles such as school governors, on line tutors.
- 3.15 It is of course impossible to cover the breadth and depth of what our volunteers and give the benefits that they receive, but included below are several case studies.
- 3.16 X began volunteering in 2015 for an exhibition held at Portsmouth Museum. At the end of the exhibition volunteers were given the opportunity to gain skills in a front line role volunteering alongside museum staff. X took on this challenge and enjoyed the experience of entering into a new work environment and so when the opportunity arose he felt he had gained the necessary skills and experience that he applied for a summer/casual role and has subsequently been employed in that role.
- 3.17 "What a useful, informative and exciting (!) day. Learned much and discovered that initial fear soon goes, once you get into your stride." D-Day Story volunteer commenting on training to give talks to visitors.
- 3.18 Through Portsmouth Together, a volunteer came to the Conan Doyle collection with some website and Content Management System experience. After a short training period, the volunteer came regularly to volunteer. On occasion he didn't turn up he would phone and explain, mainly because of poor mental health reasons and a few occasions of being admitted to hospital to deal with these episodes. After a couple of years editing and maintaining the website I had an email from him stating he had found employment and would no longer be volunteering.

**4. Reasons for recommendations**

4.1 Aside from providing a service to the council by helping us to deliver services, volunteering is also an important way of enabling residents to engage with us. Engagement with culture is widely proven to improve health - physical and mental - and wellbeing. It can help to address loneliness, reduce social isolation, help people to develop skills and gain experience.

**5. Integrated impact assessment**

5.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is attached

**6. Legal implications**

6.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this Report.

**7. Director of Finance's comments**

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

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Signed by:  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:**

**Appendix A:** Breakdown of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services volunteer hours, 2019/20

**Appendix B:** Integrated Impact Assessment

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
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The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

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Signed by:  
**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**

**Appendix A: Breakdown of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services volunteer hours, 2019/20**

<b>2019/20 (hours)</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Total (hours)</b>	<b>Total (days)</b>
Hilsea Lines	1144	1346	1088	0	3578	483.51
Portsdown Hill	1241	1227	881	1120	4469	603.92
Doyle collection	228.25	191.25	143		382.75	51.72
D-Day 75 events	200.75	0			200.75	27.13
History Centre	1005.88	992.58	1031.99		3030.45	409.52
Library Branches	2716.88	2647.33	8964.49	4776.25	19104.95	2581.75
Museums	2752	2854	2734	2095	10435	1410.14
Eastney Beam House*				218	218	29.46
HIVE	295.75				295.75	39.97
Events	0	120	18	0	138	18.65
<b>Total (hours)</b>	<b>9584.51</b>	<b>9378.16</b>	<b>14860.48</b>	<b>8209.25</b>	<b>42032.40</b>	
<b>Total (days)</b>	<b>1295.20</b>	<b>1267.32</b>	<b>2008.17</b>	<b>1109.36</b>	<b>5680.05</b>	
Eastney - included in museums Q1-Q3						